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ABSTRACT

The first stage of research into the impact of part-time employment on young people in full-time education analyzed questionnaires from 555 young people aged 14-19 in 7 secondary schools and in 7 further education sector colleges in Britain. A literature review focused on issues involved in combining part-time employment and full-time education. Findings indicated the following: employment was common among 14-15 year-olds and almost universal for 16-19 year-olds; extent of engagement in employment and range of hours worked did not vary significantly by socioeconomic grouping or location; college students and students studying toward vocational qualifications were significantly more likely to take part-time jobs and work longer hours; and the motivation to mix work and study was to earn money, usually to maintain a preferred lifestyle. Larger numbers of young people perceived work as having some adverse impact on their academic performance, and on their home and social life. Part-time work appeared to be an insignificant factor in causing dropout. Teachers and institutional managers felt paid employment was beneficial in offering preparation for adult life. Evidence supported their belief that many students work longer hours than is good for them. Findings supported a combination of strategies designed to assist young people working excessive hours to voluntarily to reduce their commitment to part-time work, backed by some tightening of legislation and codes of practice. (Contains 22 references and the survey instruments.) (YLB)

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Learning and earning:
The impact of paid employment on young people in full-time education

Peter Davies

Research report

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Peter Davies

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Enquiries regarding research projects should be directed to Andrew Morris,
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Preface and acknowledgements

This report contains the findings of the first stage of a research project undertaken by FEDA into the impact of part-time employment on young people in full-time education. The aims of this stage of the project were to:

- establish the pattern of paid employment and study amongst 14–19 year olds enroled on full-time courses
- explore the motivations and attitudes of young people towards paid employment and full-time education, and to examine the effects of combining work and study
- seek institutional perceptions and evidence of the impact of part-time work on students' commitment and achievement at college
- identify the implications for policy-makers and institutional managers, and clarify the priorities for the next stage of the project.

The sections of the report that follow comprise:

1 an **executive summary** of the main findings and their implications
2 a **literature review** of the currently published evidence that sheds light on issues concerning the combination of part-time employment and full-time education
3 the **findings of pilot questionnaire surveys** of young people and a sample of schools and colleges
4 the **conclusions** arising from the literature review and the pilot surveys, and their **implications** for national policy and institutional management.

The FEDA project team would like to acknowledge the assistance of the students and staff who participated in the pilot surveys, without which this report would not have been possible.

Learning and earning, FEDA Project Team

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1 Executive summary

1.1 The engagement by full-time students in some form of paid employment is pervasive, with the proportion rising with age. It is commonplace amongst 14–15 year olds, and nigh on universal for those aged 16–19.

1.2 For many young people, part-time work involves a significant time commitment. Almost two-thirds of those with jobs aged 16 or over work for 10 hours or more per week during term time, almost a third for 15 hours or more. Even among 14–15 year olds, almost a fifth of those with jobs exceed 10 hours.

1.3 The extent of engagement in employment, and the range of hours worked, appears to extend across students from a wide range of backgrounds. Neither varies significantly according to socio-economic grouping, or the type of catchment areas in which schools and colleges are situated.

1.4 Differences in the pattern of paid employment do exist according to the type of institution attended. Within the relevant age-bands, college students are significantly more likely than those who attend school both to take part-time jobs and to work for long hours in them when they do so. The same applies to students studying towards vocational qualifications, compared with those taking the academic route. There is no evidence that colleges are less concerned than schools about the impact of part-time work.

1.5 Overwhelmingly, the motivation for students to mix work and study is to earn money. In the large majority of cases this appears to be to maintain a preferred lifestyle, rather than as a result of financial hardship. Deprivation does not appear to be a major factor.

1.6 On balance, most young people view the combination of paid employment and full-time education positively, irrespective of the number of hours they work. Feelings of tiredness and stress are commonplace, but the demands of jobs cause very few to miss classes. Part-time work also appears to be an insignificant factor in causing drop-out.

1.7 Larger numbers of young people, especially those 16 or over, perceive work as having some adverse impact on their academic performance, and on their home and social life. Nonetheless, the majority believe that they are able to cope with both, and that it is quite reasonable to expect them to do so.

1.8 Teachers and institutional managers generally share the view that engagement in paid employment is beneficial in offering a preparation for adult life. There is also, however, a widespread opinion that many if not most students work for longer hours than is good for them.

1.9 The evidence we have found generally supports these concerns. Whilst engagement in work for a limited number of hours each week (up to 10) does not appear to have any great negative impact, and in some instances appears to enhance academic performance, beyond this level there is a strong negative correlation between hours worked and examination grades.

1.10 Few see gains from part-time work in terms of a better understanding of the relevance of their learning at school or college, or in enabling the acquisition of specific vocational skills relevant to a given career. The minority of students who feel strongly that their jobs assist understanding of the relevance of their learning is much more likely to feel that part-time work has a positive impact on academic performance.

1.11 **Almost all 18–19 year olds surveyed are being paid above the legal minimum hourly rates, and almost half of the 14–15 year olds are receiving more than £3 per hour.**

1.12 There are claims that on occasion younger students are employed when older employees leave, in order to reduce wage bills, but it is not possible to say how widespread this practice is.

1.13 Almost half of the students with jobs appear to be under at least occasional pressure from their employers to work for longer hours than they would prefer. In a minority of cases such pressure seems excessive,

1.14 Well over a third of students indicate that they would continue to work the same hours even if they were given a grant of £40 per week, and only just over one in 10 will give up work altogether.

1.15 Some mix of part-time work and full-time education appears beneficial for most young people, but reductions in the average numbers of hours worked would help to reduce any adverse effects of combining the two.

1.16 We therefore recommend that serious consideration is given to a combination of strategies designed to assist those young people working excessive hours voluntarily to reduce their commitment to part-time work, backed by some tightening of legislation and codes of practice, as follows:

a) strict enforcement of the existing law regarding employment below the age of 14
b) a review of relevant legislation in respect of the employment of 14–15-year-olds in excess of ten hours per week during termtime
c) the development and launch of a code of practice governing the employment of students aged 16–20 in full-time education, jointly backed by government, employers organisations and trade unions
d) the widespread publication of the statistical evidence that increasing hours of part-time work are strongly linked to under-achievement in examinations
d) the adoption of strategies by schools and colleges actively to support and accommodate manageable hours of part-time work by students
e) the introduction of pilot schemes to investigate the impact on part-time working hours in practice, at various levels of student grant.

1.17 More research is now needed to test the approaches outlined above. This will form the agenda for the next stage of the project.

2 Literature review: the background to concerns about learning and earning

2.1 The issue of the advisability or otherwise of young people engaging in paid employment in addition to (supposedly) full-time education must be seen in the context of government priorities to raise rates of participation and achievement. The revised national targets are for 85 per cent of 19-year-olds to be qualified to Level 2 by December 2002. Alongside these goals are commitments to reduce social exclusion and to tackle cycles of deprivation.

2.2 The genesis of this project lies in the growing concerns expressed at institutional level and elsewhere that increasing numbers of school and college students enrolled on full-time courses were engaging in part-time employment for more than minimal numbers of hours each week. A number of classroom teachers and school and college managements voiced their belief that this trend was beginning to have an adverse impact on rates of achievement, and on the extent of student involvement in extra-curricular activities. In parallel with the rise in these anxieties, though, there was an increased emphasis on the need for 14–19 education to be vocationally relevant, and to prepare students for working life. The Government's Curriculum 2000 initiative also proposes to increase the demands of full-time study.

2.3 At the time this project was mounted there were, however, few hard data on actual patterns of part-time work, and how they varied between different types of student, locations, or institution – a gap that this report is intended to help fill. Certainly there were few specific studies of the phenomenon except within individual institutions. Nonetheless, there was a growing body of evidence from other sources to support the existence of the trend identified by some schools and colleges and suggest that they could have good reason for their concerns. This evidence has arisen principally as a spin-off from research in the areas listed below, the key elements of each of which are then summarised:

- analyses of labour market trends
- investigations of the links between participation post-16 and student finance and funding
- studies of the influences on student retention and achievement.

Labour market trends

2.4 Trends in part-time employment for young people over the past 25 years have undoubtedly been influenced by the increase in full-time participation rates post-16. Analysts have identified four phases to this process (Hodgson & Spours 1999a):

- rapid rises in the take-up of full-time education from the mid-1970s until approximately 1983, resulting from the shrinkage in the youth labour market that was reflected in the collapse of apprenticeships
- a plateauing of full-time participation rates during 1983–87, as the economy emerged from recession
- a further substantial growth in both full-time participation and achievement from 1987–95, in the wake of the introduction of GCSEs and a continued expansion in higher educational opportunities
- a plateauing of participation and attainment trends since 1995, with a slight rise in the number of young people moving from full-time education into jobs.

Therefore, 25 years ago the equivalents of a substantial number of today's full-time students would have been in full-time employment. It may be that at least some of any increased tendency for young people to mix work and study is connected with this fact. Labour market influences should not be exaggerated, though. The growth in participation rates since the mid-1980s appears to link far more with the impact of GCSEs than with the level of youth unemployment (Richardson 1999).

2.5 Over the same period there have also been major changes in the structure of the UK labour market. The manufacturing sector has suffered a sustained decline in jobs, while the service sector has expanded. A significant and growing proportion of employment in the latter part of the economy has been in unskilled or semi-skilled work at the lower end of national rates of pay, and of a casualised or part-time nature. Though hard evidence is difficult to come by, claims have been made that a 'substitution effect' is taking place in some firms, whereby the selection of students to fill job vacancies has been deliberately pursued in order to depress wage bills (Davies C 1999). Whatever the position, opportunities for young people to mix work and study are greater than ever before.

2.6 High levels of economic activity among young people have, in fact, been a distinctive feature of the UK labour market for some time (Employment Department 1995). Data from the Labour Force Survey indicated that by 1998 47 per cent of 16-year-olds in full-time education were also in employment, rising to 52 per cent for 17-year-olds (DfEE 1998). As we shall see, these figures almost certainly underestimate the true proportions. Neither do they reveal the actual number of hours being worked, which it seems reasonable to believe could be a more significant factor for student attainment than whether or not a student has a job in the first place.

Student finance, funding and participation

2.7 The confused and variable arrangements for FE student financial support have come in for increasing criticism of late, especially from those concerned to bring about sustained improvements in levels of participation and achievement post-16. The report of the Widening Participation Committee of the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) concluded that '*the present system is neither fair nor transparent: a root and branch review is needed*' (Kennedy 1997). Further research has described the detail of this so-called '*funding lottery*' (Herbert and Callender 1997). More recent work has identified the existence of considerable financial hardship amongst FE students, though more especially among adults with children from poorer backgrounds (Callender 1999). It reveals that:

- over half claimed to experience financial hardship, 70 per cent encountering problems meeting course-related costs
- just under a quarter had considered dropping out for financial reasons
- over a third considered that financial difficulties negatively affected their academic performance
- 70 per cent of all students undertook some paid work during the academic year, most working continuously throughout the year
- among those who had taken jobs to alleviate financial hardship, nearly a third believed that their coursework had suffered because they could not devote enough time to it.

2.8 Research carried out for FEDA by the consultancy *Inside Track* complemented these findings, suggesting that reductions in student financial support over the past few years were having an impact both on access to FE and on the quality of the student experience (Sheldon forthcoming). In the main, it was mature students who were finding it more difficult to gain access to FE as support through local authority discretionary awards has diminished. However, students of all ages were said to be under pressure to reduce their involvement in college to a minimum as part-time work became an increasingly important source of funding. Students in practical subjects which require expenditure on materials, or visits, were said to be particularly likely to suffer hardship.

2.9 Nevertheless, though many were convinced of a vital link between financial circumstances, participation, and successful completion, hard statistical evidence for its existence was slight. It was also acknowledged to be more apparent in the case of initial participation than it was where the retention and achievement of already enrolled students was concerned (Davies P 1999). Thus, the precise relationships between financial hardship, the engagement in part-time employment as a result, and the knock-on effects on retention and achievement were by no means explicit.

Student retention and achievement

2.10 The changes in the funding mechanism for public-sector further education institutions in the UK that were introduced in the wake of Incorporation stimulated increased interest in ways of improving rates of student retention and achievement. Many in colleges had always paid attention to these goals, but successful completion was now directly rewarded, whilst above average rates of drop-out and failure became financially punitive. In consequence, there was a rapid growth in the demand for hard research evidence that could identify the main influences on retention, as a means of suggesting effective remedial strategies.

2.11 From 1994 therefore, FEDA and its predecessor organisations undertook a number of studies of the problem. They came to essentially similar findings which challenged some popularly held beliefs that the causes of drop-out were largely factors external to colleges and therefore outside their control (with financial hardship prominent among them). In fact, when the profiles of students who had withdrawn from their courses were compared with those who had completed successfully, perceptions of the quality of induction, teaching and support for progression were identified as the major differences. Though found to be pervasive, financial hardship did not appear to be a good predictor of drop-out or failure. The influences on retention were seen to be complex. Financial problems did indeed trigger drop-out sometimes but, when they arose, students who were satisfied that they were on the right course, and were happy with the quality of teaching they were receiving, still tended to complete successfully (Martinez 1997; FEDA 1998; Martinez & Munday 1998; Davies P 1999).

2.12 Qualitative evidence from the FEDA surveys included the view of many teaching staff and college managements that long hours spent by students in paid employment were an increasingly important cause of drop-out and under-achievement. Interviews with students conducted during the projects concerned confirmed that a number were working for over 20 hours per week. However, the questionnaires employed did not seek specific data on whether or not students were engaging in part-time employment and, if so, to what extent. It was therefore impossible to identify the existence or otherwise of any statistical relationship between engagement in work and the likelihood of drop-our or failure. As already indicated from other findings, though, if one existed it was unlikely to be connected with financial hardship.

2.13 Another major study undertaken in parallel with FEDA's work, involving almost 6,500 students in 26 FE colleges, did gather data at the commencement of students courses on the extent to which they anticipated being involved in part-time employment, and was then able to examine its relationship with drop-out (RCU 1998). As with some of the other research we have described, evidence of financial hardship was certainly present: 52 per cent of students reported worries about either the costs of travel or of supporting themselves on the course, 25 per cent were worried about both; less than a third expected to be able to take their full-time course without some form of part-time employment. Nonetheless, the report on the survey also found that '*those with least outside commitments were most likely to leave, whereas those with most outside commitments had a leaving rate only just above the survey average...such commitments are not necessarily a problem especially if students have become used to dealing with them.*' The results appeared to 'refute the view often held by staff that outside work commitments make it difficult for students to apply themselves successfully on courses'. No statistically significant link was found between the extent to which students felt they had to engage in paid employment and the pattern of non-completion. The report concluded that *'outside time commitments and a need for part-time employment do not increase the likelihood of non-completion and may actually reduce it'*.

2.14 Similarly, a study of student absenteeism in an FE college found that students with jobs were, in fact, slightly less likely to miss classes than those without (Longhurst 1999). Of those who were working, the ones who had ever missed classes because of doing work were only spending slightly longer hours in employment than those who never did so for this reason.

2.15 A rather less optimistic picture was drawn from a survey into students' preparations for 1999 A level examinations, undertaken on behalf of Northumberland County Council (Harris 1999). The majority of students were found to be doing part-time jobs, some for over 15 hours per week. In many cases, prime revision time was being lost, though most intended to cut down on the amount of paid employment as the examinations approached.

Impact of part-time employment

2.16 Some specific studies of the issue have been undertaken since the combination of learning and earning began to be identified as a potential threat to student retention and achievement. Initially, these concentrated on an investigation into the relationship between the numbers of hours worked and performance in public examinations. The most comprehensive of these involved some 25,000 school and college students who completed A levels and Advanced GNVQs in 1998 (University of Durham 1999). Almost 60 per cent were involved in part-time employment. The results indicated that as working hours increased beyond five per week, students were progressively more likely to have achieved less well, both in absolute terms, and in terms of value added on GCSE scores. This trend became noticeably more marked beyond 10 hours per week, though up to five hours per week in employment appeared to have no negative impact.

2.17 Surveys conducted within individual institutions have reached somewhat similar findings. A sample of 88 A level Science students at an FE college also found that those who worked for five hours or more per week achieved lower than predicted A level point scores, though here the trend became particularly critical for those working in excess of 15 hours per week, whilst work up to five hours per week appeared to have a positive impact (Howard 1999). A study of almost 300 full-time students at a sixth form college, 92 per cent of whom were in full-time employment, revealed a strong negative correlation between hours worked and average GCSE scores, though the relationship with predicted A level grades was less apparent (Coles 1999). A notable feature of the first of these studies is that, after the results were presented to subsequent cohorts of students, a number claimed in consequence to have reduced voluntarily the number of hours that they worked.

2.18 In addition to the FEDA pilot survey, there have also been a small number of others that have examined the issue of learning and earning specifically, and have investigated a range of aspects as well as that of the potential impact on examination results. These include the survey of full-time students at a sixth form college, referred to above, plus studies of:

- a sample of 1,140 schoolchildren in Years 6–11 of five North Tyneside secondary schools (O'Donnell & White 1999)
- a sample of almost 2,000 14–19 year olds drawn from six secondary schools and an FE college in South Gloucestershire (Hodgson & Spours 1999)
- 22 GNVQ Level 2 & 3 Art and Design students at a tertiary college in the South-west (Meredith, Read & Webber 1998)
- 16 and 17-year-old students at a girls' secondary school in the London Borough of Sutton (Davies C 1999).

2.19 The findings of all of these surveys have much in common, and are generally in line with those arising from FEDA's pilot survey, which are covered in detail in the section that follows. They are not dealt with here, therefore, except to record key points and findings of note which complement those of FEDA's survey, viz:

- Engagement in paid employment by young people in full-time education was found to be extensive, and above the levels indicated in official statistics. It ranged from approximately 30–40 per cent of 14-year-olds, and reached 80–100 per cent among those aged 18–19. While the majority of 14-year-olds appeared to work for fewer than five hours per week, this was not the case with 18–19 year olds, where in some instances more than half were working in excess of 10 hours per week, and more than a quarter in excess of 15. Sizeable minorities reported that they occasionally worked for longer hours than they preferred in response to requests from their employers. The study of GNVQ Art and Design students in a tertiary college found that over a quarter of the employers concerned expected 100 per cent commitment to the job, irrespective of the demands of the courses concerned.
- The overwhelming motivation to work was to earn money. Nevertheless, only in around 10 –15 per cent of cases did the financial circumstances of the family, or the need to meet basic living costs, seem to be a major factor. However, parental pressures for children to be financially independent did appear to increase with the end of compulsory education.

- Most young people surveyed saw the mix of earning and learning in a relatively positive light, helping them to gain confidence and independence. Though many reported feeling tired or stressed as a result of working, few felt it had any significantly adverse impact on their academic performance. Teaching staff were usually much less sanguine about the latter point. Though most shared the view that some part-time employment had a beneficial impact in preparing students for adult life, they also considered that many students worked for more hours than was good for them.
- The North Tyneside study found high rates of injury as a result of part-time employment, with 44 per cent of those surveyed reporting that they had suffered an injury at work in the previous year. There was also widespread infringement of employment regulations, in particular those relating to children working below the legal working age.
- The findings of the South Gloucestershire study led to three broad types of student being identified:

  The HE aspirant, who is more likely to work shorter hours and to accept advice about limiting part-time work in order to achieve good grades.
  The waverer, who is less sure about HE, more likely to work for longer hours, and less likely to limit them around examination time.
  The discouraged worker, who has stayed on post-16 because no suitable full-time job was available, who sees part-time work as a possible way into the labour market, and who will risk getting poor grades rather than jeopardise the job, sometimes withdrawing from their course altogether.

  When interviewed, many students indicated that they would appreciate focused discussions with their tutor on the relationship between job and study, and on how they manage their time.
- The study undertaken at the girls' secondary school came to generally more pessimistic conclusions than the others about the net effects on students of mixing earning and learning. It pointed out that when the hours for attending class, undertaking private study, and engaging in paid employment were aggregated, some sixth formers were clocking up totals of as much as 70 hours per week. It also claimed numerous examples of dubious practice by employers, some within leading national companies. Examples quoted included employers asking to see students' timetables so that they could call them into work during the school day, and adopting a deliberate policy of employing increased numbers of younger staff in order to reduce wage costs when turnover fell below budget.

3 Pilot survey

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 The survey was designed to obtain completed questionnaires from a sample of young people aged 14–19, who were currently engaged in full-time education, that was adequate to allow for comparisons between types of institution and catchment area.

3.1.2 In all, agreement to participate was obtained from seven secondary schools and seven further education (FE) sector colleges, though subsequently pressure of work caused one of the colleges to withdraw. Questionnaires were distributed early in May 1999. Each school was asked to distribute questionnaires to a whole class or year group in each of two different specified years between Years 9 and 13 inclusive. Colleges were asked to circulate questionnaires to a range of tutor groups and programme areas with high concentrations of 16–19 year old full-time students. Once students had completed the questionnaire, they were instructed to seal it in the envelope that was provided, and hand it in to their tutor for return to FEDA. A copy of the student questionnaire is attached as Appendix A to this report.

3.1.3 In the event, the incidence of study leave for GCSE and A level examinations meant that fewer returns than intended could be obtained from school students in Years 11 and 13. A number of completed questionnaires were returned by college students aged 20 or above, but as fewer than 3 per cent of respondents were involved, these have not been omitted from the analysis.

3.1.4 Details of the institutions and the response rates are as follows:

Institution	Location	No. of returns	Response rate %
College A	South-East	38	79
College B	Greater London	56	93
College C	South-West	69	81
College D+	South-West	33	52
College E	South-West	26	52
College F+	Greater London	35	70
School A	South-West	51	85
School B	South-East	42	100
School C	Greater London	44	88
School D	South-West	51	100
School E	East Midlands	47	94
School F	Greater London	18	n/a
School G	South-West	45	100
TOTAL		**555**	**n/a**

\+ Tertiary College

3.1.5 Each participating centre was also requested to complete and return one copy of a further questionnaire in order to establish staff opinion concerning the issues connected with learning and earning. Completed questionnaires were returned by all institutions listed above, with the exception of College E and School C.

3.2 Findings: student questionnaire

Profile of sample

3.2.1 The majority of respondents to the survey were female (57 per cent), a slightly higher proportion than that for the 14–19 age cohort within the total population.

3.2.2 Tables 1–4 below indicate the breakdown of respondents by age, socio-economic grouping, ethnicity and main qualification(s) being studied towards.The profile of respondents included a larger minority of Bangladeshi students than that for the 14–19 population as a whole, all of who were aged 16 or above.

Table 1: Age profile of respondents

Age	%
14	11
15	20
16	10
17	38
18	16
19	3
20 or older	3

Table 2: Socio-economic profile of respondents

Socio-economic grouping	%
A	2
B	22
C1	44
C2	19
D	7
E	7

Table 3: Ethnic profile of respondents

Ethnic group	%	Ethnic group	%
Asian		Black	
of Indian origin	3	of Caribbean origin	1
of Pakistani origin	1	of African origin	1
of Bangladeshi origin	11	of other Black origin	1
of East African origin	0.2	White	
of Chinese origin	1	of British origin	77
of other Asian origin	0.4	of Irish origin	1
of other European origin	2		
Another ethnic group	1		

Table 4: Main qualification(s) being studied towards by respondents

Main qualification	%
GCSEs	32
GCE A/AS levels	31
GNVQ Intermediate	9
GNVQ Advanced	15
NVQ level 1	1
NVQ level 2	2
BTEC National Cert./Dipl.	10
Higher National Cert./Dipl.	1

Extent of paid employment

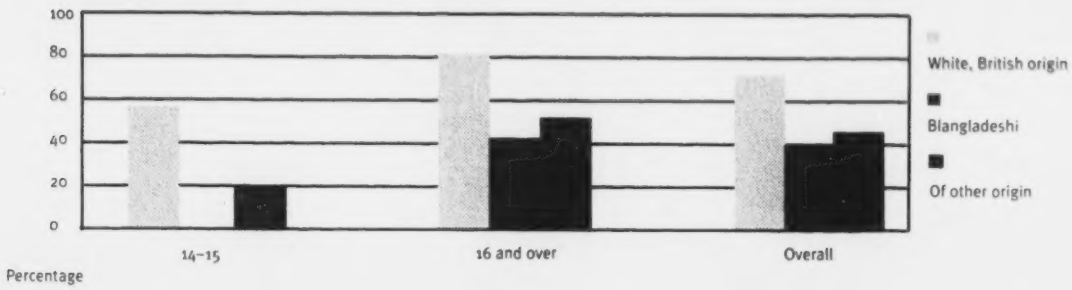
3.2.3 Just over two-thirds of respondents (67 per cent) indicated that at the time of the survey they were engaged in some form of paid employment in addition to attending school or college. As might be expected, the proportion with jobs was notably higher amongst those aged 16 or above (72 per cent) than for those aged 14 or 15 (53 per cent). In the tables that follow, the data is therefore broken down into these two age categories, as well as being provided in aggregate.

3.2.4 Well over one-third (42 per cent) of those without paid jobs at the time of the survey indicated that they had done some paid work during the past year. This figure is exceeded by the combined proportion who gave the answers '*can't find a suitable job*' (53 per cent) or '*in between jobs*' (7 per cent) when asked why they were not doing any paid work at the time.

3.2.5 Only 10 per cent of respondents without paid employment indicated that this was the result of parental opposition to them taking jobs. This figure compares with larger proportions who gave the answers '*work would interfere with studies too much*' (43 per cent), '*work would interfere with social life too much*' (18 per cent) or 'don't need the money' (13 per cent).

3.2.6 No obvious relationship could be identified between the extent to which paid employment was undertaken, and the *socio-economic grouping* of respondents, or the *type of catchment area* in which the institution they attended was situated. However, there were links between the incidence of paid jobs and respondents' *ethnicity, gender*, and the *type of institution* they attended. A higher than average number of *white* students of *British origin* were in paid employment, and a lower than average number of *Asian* students of *Bangladeshi origin* (Figure 1). (Given the concentration of Bangladeshi respondents in the 16 and over age band noted in 3.2.2 above, the true rate of take-up of part-time employment amongst 16–19 year olds in full-time education is likely to be above the 72 per cent found in our survey.) Otherwise, no statistically significant relationship could be identified between ethnicity and the likelihood of mixing work with full-time education. It should be noted, though, that the small numbers of respondents from some of the other ethnic groups made it impossible to be certain that this is the case in practice.

Figure 1: Incidence of paid employment by ethnicity

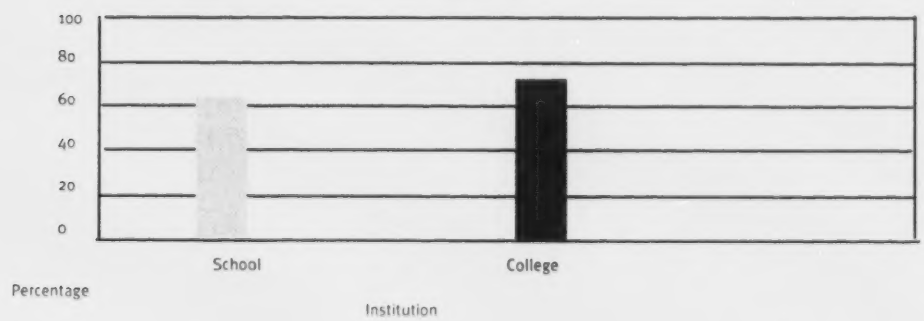


Within the same age band, female students were more likely than males to mix work with full-time education (figure 2)

Figure 2: Incidence of paid employment by gender

Similarly, college students aged 16 and above were significantly more likely to have jobs than their counterparts in school sixth forms (figure 3).

Figure 3: Incidence of paid employment by type of educational institution



Days and hours worked in paid employment

3.2.7 For those respondents who indicated that they were in paid employment at the time of the survey, Tables 5 and 6 set out the breakdown of the numbers of hours per week normally involved and the days concerned, in term-time and during the holidays. As can be seen, sizeable numbers of young people appear to be working for lengthy periods in paid employment during a normal week in term-time. Over half of those with jobs (53 per cent) indicated that they worked for *more than 10 hours per week* (as we have already noted, the time beyond which there is evidence of a negative impact on A level performance) and a quarter (25 per cent) for more than 15 hours per week. Among those aged 16 and above, the equivalent proportions were 64 per cent and 31 per cent.

Table 5: Hours per week normally devoted to paid employment

Number	Term-time			Holidays		
	14–15	16 +	Total	14–15	16 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Less than 5	39	7	15	23	6	10
5–9	42	29	33	37	14	20
10–14	12	33	28	11	17	17
15–19	5	21	17	11	20	17
20 or above	3	10	8	17	43	36

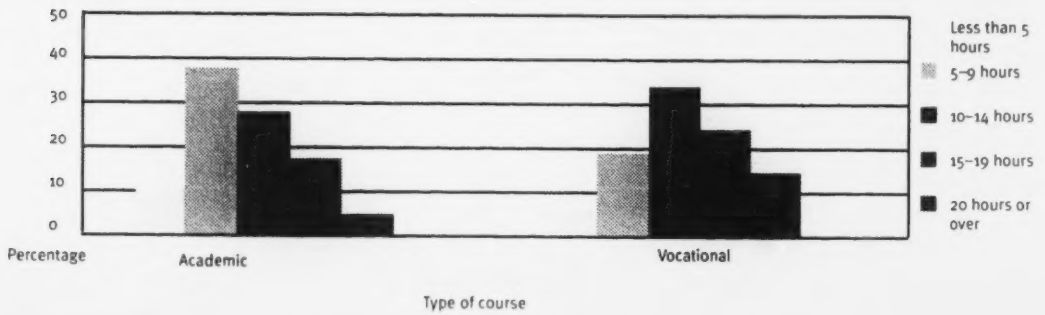
Table 6: Timing of paid employment

Time	Term-time			Holidays		
	14–15	16 +	Total	14–15	16 +	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Weekday morning(s)	18	5	8	38	28	31
Weekday afternoon(s)	13	9	10	31	28	29
Weekday evening(s)	45	58	53	33	35	34
Saturdays	67	77	74	53	44	46
Sundays	40	54	50	37	29	30
timing varies	17	12	14	13	15	15

3.2.8 No statistically significant relationships could be identified between the number of hours worked and the *ethnicity, gender* or *socio-economic grouping* of respondents, nor the *type of catchment area* in which the schools or colleges attended were located. However, even when the same *age* band was compared, *school* students were generally found to work for fewer hours per week during term-time than their counterparts at *college*, and students on *academic* courses for fewer hours than those studying towards *vocational* qualifications (Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 4: Comparative weekly hours in paid employment of school and college students

Figure 5: Comparative weekly hours in paid employment of students on academic and vocational courses



3.2.9 Sizeable proportions of those undertaking paid employment also indicated that in term-time their hours of work potentially clashed with the demands of homework or coursework (74 per cent working on *Saturdays*, 50 per cent on *Sundays* and 53 per cent on *weekday evenings*).

3.2.10 However, only a small minority reported that they were working at times that might clash with normal school or college hours (8 per cent on *weekday mornings*, and nine per cent on *weekday afternoons*, figures which include those with jobs such as delivering papers that can be fitted in before or after classes'. The rise in the number of hours worked during the *holidays*, and the change in working patterns towards employment on *weekdays*, both suggest that the majority of those concerned were making efforts to fit work around school or college hours.

3.2.11 A third of those with jobs (33 per cent) indicated that they *sometimes felt pressurised by their employers to work additional hours against their will*, and a further 12 per cent reported that they *often* felt this to be the case.

Nature of employment

3.2.12 The places where respondents were employed, and the types of work involved are set out in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7: Place of employment

Place	14–15 %	16+ %	Total %
Shop	12	18	17
Cafe or restaurant	14	17	16
Private home	45	8	16
Supermarket	-	17	13
Pub or bar	18	8	11
Department store	-	11	8
Newsagent	17	3	7
Office	4	7	7
Fast food takeaway	1	7	6
Nursery or nursing home	4	5	6
Hairdresser or beauty salon	4	1	2
Workshop	4	1	2
Garden centre	1	2	2
DIY centre	1	2	2
Farm	6	1	2
Garage	1	1	1
Warehouse or storage depot	1	2	1
Other (Incl. school, college, hotel, b & b, leisure centre)	13	14	13

Table 8: Type of employment

Type	14-15 %	16+ %	Total %
Dealing with customers	36	70	62
Operating till or checkout	12	55	44
Cleaning	20	40	35
Waiting or serving drinks	24	32	30
Making stock checks	10	34	27
Stacking shelves or collecting trolleys	8	31	25
Cooking or preparing food	13	26	22
Childcare or babysitting	35	15	20
Working with computers (IT)	8	13	13
Labouring or manual work	20	10	12
Delivering papers	30	2	9
Supervising other staff	1	11	8
Office duties	6	7	7
Reception duties	6	6	6
Maintenance and repair work	6	3	4
Animal care	10	1	3
Hairdressing or beauty therapy	4	1	2
Other	8	3	4

3.2.13 The *retail* trade and *restaurants, cafes and bars* were the dominant employment locations. The large majority of jobs appeared to involve only routine duties of an *unskilled* or *semi-skilled* nature (only 13 per cent indicating that they *worked with computers or IT*, and 8 per cent that they *supervised other staff*). Less than half (39 per cent) reported that they had received any training from their employers, other than basic instruction in how to do the job in question. For the large majority of this group, such training as had been received appeared to be of a *rudimentary nature*, with only 10 per cent referring to any *formal course or certification*, and 4 per cent to the *provision of training materials*. Unsurprisingly, there were differences in the patterns of employment between those aged 14–15, and those aged 16 and above, reflecting the more restricted formal employment opportunities available to the former group, and the consequentially larger proportions earning money through jobs such as *babysitting* and *paper-rounds*.

Rates of pay and patterns of expenditure

3.2.14 The survey was undertaken after the introduction of the *minimum wage* of £3.00 per hour for 18–20 year olds. In fact, over three-quarters of the respondents in work (77 per cent) were being paid *an hourly rate at or above this level* (88 per cent of those aged 16 and above (Table 9).

Table 9: Hourly rates of pay

Hourly pay-rate	14-15	16+	Total
£	%	%	%
Under £2.30	18	1	5
£2.30–£2.50	15	2	5
£2.51–£2.75	9	2	4
£2.76–£3.00	14	8	9
£3.01–£3.50	15	22	21
£3.51–£4.00	12	33	27
Over £4.00	17	33	29

3.2.15 For the large majority of respondents in employment, earnings were spent on *socialising* and '*luxuries*', including drinks, cigarettes, cinema, clubs, hobbies and interests, fashion clothing (76 per cent indicating that a high proportion of their earnings were spent on such items). The next most important area of expenditure for most was *savings for major purchases*, including for a holiday and to buy a bike or car (50 per cent). Nonetheless, sizeable minorities indicated that they spent large proportions of their earnings *on basic living costs* (34 per cent), or *on school or college expenses* (20 per cent) 37 per cent and 27 per cent respectively of those aged 16 and above (Table 10).

Table 10: Where the money goes

(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale where 1=nothing spent, and 5=a great deal spent)

Area of expenditure	14–15	16 +	Total
Socialising and 'luxuries'	4.22	4.09	4.13
Savings for major purchases	3.34	3.35	3.35
Basic living costs	2.43	2.94	2.78
School or college expenses	1.70	2.78	2.50

Motivation for taking paid employment

3.2.16 *Earning money* was a primary motivation for taking jobs for the overwhelming majority of respondents. Motivations connected with *gaining independence, gaining experience* and *building up an employment track record* were also important for sizeable minorities, though only 11 per cent recorded *trying out a specific career* as a primary reason. Just over a fifth (21 per cent) indicated that their *parents wanting or needing them to work* was a major reason for them taking a job (Table 11).

Table 11: Reasons for employment
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent to which each reason applied, where 1=not at all, and 5=very much)

Reason	14–15	16 +	Total
Earn money	4.83	4.88	4.86
Gain independence	3.29	3.60	3.49
Build up track record to help get better jobs in future	3.17	3.16	3.16
Gain useful experience	3.04	3.10	3.08
Meet people or make new friends	2.87	3.02	2.96
Find out what work is like	2.97	2.69	2.75
Help out family or friends	2.58	2.35	2.39
Parents want or need me to work	2.06	2.20	2.15
Contribute to society	2.17	1.99	2.01
Try out specific career	2.18	1.90	1.95

Impact of paid employment

3.2.17 On balance, the majority of those with jobs were more inclined to view the impact of paid employment on their lives positively, rather than negatively. Many stressed the virtues of *gaining self-confidence* and *gaining useful experience and skills*, though only 13 per cent indicated that a primary effect of their job was a *better understanding of the relevance of what was learnt at school or college*. Sizeable minorities recorded major adverse effects on their home life, social life and performance at school or college (particularly pronounced amongst those aged 16 and above, no doubt reflecting the relatively longer hours they worked). *Tiredness* and *stress* were some of the most commonly recorded negative effects of employment. Nonetheless, at 10 per cent the proportion who reported that a major effect of paid employment was *doing better at school or college*, was not far short of the number who indicated the opposite (11 per cent). Only a small number (9 per cent) reported that their jobs caused them frequently to arrive late at school or college or to miss classes (8 per cent, Table 12).

3.2.18 There was a strong correlation between the extent to which *classes were reported as being missed*, and the perception that those concerned felt they were *doing less well at school or college* as a result of having a job.

Table 12: Effects of employment
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent to which each applied, where 1=not at all, and 5=very much)

Effect	14–15	16 +	Total
▪ Gaining self-confidence	3.53	3.62	3.60
▪ Gaining useful experience or skills	3.22	3.54	3.48
▪ Tiredness	2.68	3.36	3.18
▪ Helpful preparation for adult life	3.01	2.95	2.94
▪ Interference with social life	2.45	3.01	2.89
▪ Stress	2.03	3.02	2.77
▪ Difficulty finding time to complete homework or coursework	1.75	2.81	2.56
▪ Interference with commitments at home	1.79	2.43	2.29
▪ Better understanding of relevance of what you learn at school or college	2.07	2.23	2.20
▪ Doing less well in school or college assessments or examinations	1.59	2.18	2.03
▪ Doing better in school or college assessments or examinations	1.79	1.81	1.83
▪ Arriving late at school or college	1.28	1.63	1.56
▪ Missing classes	1.12	1.61	1.50
▪ Exposure to racial, sexual or other harassment	1.32	1.44	1.41

3.2.18 There was also some link (more noticeable amongst the 16 and above age group) between the number of weekly hours worked in term time and the extent to which respondents considered that they had *difficulty finding time to complete homework or coursework* and that they were *doing less well in school or college assessments or examinations* (Tables 13 and 14).

Table 13: Hours worked and difficulty in finding time to complete homework or coursework
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent of difficulty, where 1=not at all, and 5=very much)

Hours	14–15	16 +	Total
Less than 5	1.61	2.00	1.78
5–9	1.63	2.78	2.47
10–14	2.33	2.74	2.69
15–19	1.50	3.04	2.97
20 or over	3.00	3.09	3.12
Overall	1.75	2.81	2.56

Table 14: Hours worked and adverse effect on school or college assessments or examinations
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent of adverse effect, where 1=not at all, and 5=very much)

Hours	14–15	16 +	Total
Less than 5	1.63	1.47	1.56
5–9	1.52	2.01	1.85
10–14	1.88	2.19	2.18
15–19	1.25	2.54	2.47
20 or over	1.50	2.19	2.17
Overall	1.59	2.18	2.03

3.2.19 The minority who felt that that employment had a *positive effect on school performance* were also much more likely to have perceived that their work provided a *better understanding of the relevance of what was learnt at school or college.*

3.2.20 Only 5 per cent of those with jobs were unequivocal that their work *helped them with their studies*, with a further 16 per cent indicating that it did so *to some extent*. When this latter group of respondents were asked for details, most mentioned the contribution to *specific vocational subjects or courses*, such as business studies, whilst 17 per cent mentioned a gain in *communication skills and general confidence*. A larger minority (20 per cent) were certain that their current job would *help them in their future career*, with a further 26 per cent feeling that it would do so *to some extent*.

Attitudes to work and study

3.2.21 Almost half of those in paid employment (47 per cent) agreed that on balance young people *benefit from having a job as well as studying*, and less than a quarter (22 per cent) disagreed. Almost half (48 per cent), however, agreed that they would *prefer not to work as well as study, but they needed the spending money*. In general, there was only minority agreement that *combining work and study created difficulties*, though the proportions were noticeably larger in the case of those aged 16 and above. Less than one-fifth (17 per cent) agreed that they *preferred their jobs to school or college*. Only 13 per cent agreed that having a job made it *less likely that they would achieve good grades at school or college*. A slightly larger minority (30 per cent) agreed that *their employers should make it easier for them to combine work and study*, than agreed that their *school or college should do so* (25 per cent, Table 15).

Table 15: Attitudes to work and study
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale, the extent to which each agreed with the statements concerned, where 1=strongly disagree, and 5=strongly agree)

Statement	14–15	16 +	Total
■ On balance, young people benefit from having a job as well as studying	3.42	3.34	3.35
■ I would prefer not to work as well as study but I need the spending money	2.61	3.51	3.25
■ I enjoy both attending school or college and my job(s)	2.86	3.03	3.00
■ Working now will help me get a good job in the future	3.39	2.84	2.99
■ My employer(s) should try to make it easier for me to combine work and study	2.09	2.88	2.68
■ My school or college should try to make it easier for me to combine work and study	2.49	2.64	2.60
■ I prefer my job(s) to school or college	3.00	2.17	2.38
■ I find it difficult to manage both school or college work and my job(s)	1.74	2.47	2.27
■ I would prefer not to attend school or college but I need to get qualified	2.46	2.12	2.18
■ Having a job makes it less likely that I will achieve good grades at school or college	1.68	2.26	2.11
■ I would prefer not to work as well as study but I need to contribute to my home	1.64	1.91	1.83
■ I would prefer not to work as well as study but my parents want me to	1.43	1.86	1.74

3.2.22 There was some link between the number of weekly hours worked in term time and the extent to which respondents agreed that they *found it difficult to manage both school or college work and their job(s)* and that *having a job made it less likely that they would achieve good grades at school or college* (Tables 16 and 17). In contrast, there was no relationship between number of hours worked and the extent to which respondents agreed that *on balance, young people benefit from having a job as well as studying.*

Table 16: Hours worked and attitude to combining work and study
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent to which each agreed with the statement 'I find it difficult to manage both school or college work and my job(s), where 1=strongly disagree, and 5=strongly agree)

Hours	14-15	16+	Total
Less than 5	1.61	1.84	1.69
5–9	1.75	2.32	2.11
10–14	2.11	2.67	2.62
15–19	2.25	2.67	2.62
20 or over	1.50	2.26	2.23
Overall	1.74	2.47	2.27

Table 17: Hours worked and attitude to impact of job on school or college performance
(Figures indicate mean scores of respondents in paid employment, using a 5-point scale to rate the extent to which each agreed with the statement 'Having a job makes it less likely that I will achieve good grades at school or college', where 1=strongly disagree, and 5=strongly agree)

Hours	14–15	16 +	Total
Less than 5	1.46	1.58	1.52
5–9	1.65	2.19	2.02
10–14	2.00	2.38	2.34
15–19	2.00	2.37	2.33
20 or over	2.50	2.38	2.44
Overall	1.66	2.26	2.11

3.2.23 The extent to which those in employment agreed that they found it *difficult to manage both school or college work and their job(s)* was strongly correlated to the extent to which they felt working was causing them to *do less well at school or college*. Similarly, the level of agreement that having a job made it *less likely that good grades would be achieved at school or college* was also strongly linked with the perceived difficulty of managing to combine employment with study. Perceived difficulties in finding time to complete homework or coursework as a result of having a job were associated with agreement that *employment made it less likely that good grades would be achieved.* Problems in combining employment with attendance at school or college were also linked to a higher propensity to report *stress* as an effect of working.

Impact of student grant

3.2.24 When asked about the impact on their hours of work of a grant of £40 per week, over a third of those in jobs (37 per cent) indicated that it would make *no difference*, and only 12 per cent that they would *give up paid employment entirely* (Table 18). Reductions in hours were generally more pronounced amongst 14 and 15 year olds, no doubt a reflection of the relative greater size of the grant in relation to their normal weekly earnings.

Table 18: Weekly hours worked if given grant of £40 pw

Weekly hours worked	**14–15**	**16 +**	**Total**
	%	%	%
Same as at present	25	40	37
None	12	12	12
Up to 5 hours less	10	17	15
5–10 hours less	39	29	31
More than 10 hours less	15	3	6

3.3 Findings: centre questionnaire

Perceived extent of paid employment

3.3.1 The centres that participated in the survey appeared to be well aware of the extent to which their students were engaging in paid employment. Four of the six schools indicated that they estimated that the *majority* of those aged 14–15 had jobs, while all centres believed the *majority* of their 16 and above students were in paid employment.

3.3.2 No school considered that 14–15 year old students could cope adequately with more than around *8 hours work per week* in addition to their studies, with two schools indicating that they felt *less than 3 hours* was the limit. No centre considered that full-time students aged 16 and above could cope adequately with *more than 15 hours paid employment per week*, though five centres indicated that they regarded *9–15 hours* as possible, and only one centre felt that *less than three hours* was the limit for this group.

3.3.3 Two schools believed that the *majority* of their 14–15 year old students regularly exceeded the number of hours that they could cope with, and three thought that a *minority* did. In the case of students aged 16 and above, five centres considered that a *majority* regularly exceeded the number of hours with which they could cope, and a further five believed that a *minority* did so. All centres indicated that students sometimes explained problems with their studies by saying that they were *under pressure from their employer to work for longer hours that they would prefer.*

Perceived problems and benefits resulting from paid employment

3.3.4 Most of the centres considered that pervasive problems were caused by mixing paid employment and full-time study, in the form of signs of *tiredness* and *stress* among students, and their *underperformance in assessments and failure to complete coursework or homework adequately*. Only a minority felt that students missing classes as a knock-on effect of their employment was a major problem, though four centres believed that it was a significant cause of *drop-out* (Table 19).

Table 19: Extent of problems resulting from paid employment
(Figures indicate numbers of centres choosing each rating, using a 5-point scale, where 1=not at all and 5=very much)

Problem	1	2	3	4	5
■ Missing sports or other out-of-class activities	1	3	1	3	3
■ Signs of tiredness in class	1	1	3	4	2
■ Under-performance in assessments	-	3	2	6	-
■ Not completing coursework or homework adequately	-	2	2	5	1
■ Signs of stress in class	1	1	3	4	2
■ Arriving late or leaving early	-	4	4	3	-
■ Withdrawing from courses before completion	2	5	-	3	1
■ Missing classes	2	4	2	3	-

Written comments included:

'A clash of priorities - students are often afraid of losing jobs so do not attend out-of-class activities such as fieldwork, or theatre trips to see set texts.'

(Director of Student Services, College F)

'It creates a culture where their part-time work becomes more important than their studies.'

(Deputy Head, School D)

'It creates problems for us in an area with a very healthy employment record. Part-time jobs can turn into full-time, instead of college. It is difficult to compete by telling students that it will benefit you in the long-run to stay at college.'

(Student Services Manager, College C)

3.3.5 Only three centres considered that these problems differed by *level of qualification* being studied, and only two by *programme* or *subject area*. School E and College C considered that they were relatively greater amongst GNVQ students, with the latter also including those studying towards National Diplomas. School A felt that they were more prevalent among those studying mathematics and science than in other A level subjects.

3.3.6 A majority of centres perceived that students gained substantially from taking paid employment, in addition to attending school or college, in the areas of: *learning to get on with people; gaining self-confidence and independence; acquiring useful vocational experience or skills; and in preparing for adult life* (Table 20).

Table 20: Benefits gained from paid employment
(Figures indicate number of centres choosing each rating using a 5-point scale, where 1=none and 5=very great)

Benefit	1	2	3	4	5
Learn to get on with people	-	-	2	2	7
Gain independence	-	-	2	4	5
Gain self-confidence	-	-	1	5	5
Gain useful vocational experience or skills	-	1	3	4	3
Helpful preparation for adult life	1	1	2	4	3
Better understanding of relevance of learning	1	1	4	1	4
Contribute to society	-	4	4	2	1
Avoid criminal or anti-social activities	2	5	2	1	1

College F considered that some students also benefitted from *a sense of satisfaction or duty in contributing to family finances.*

Perceived influences leading to paid employment

3.3.7 A majority of centres considered that *financial requirements* and *peer group and family* pressures were important influences on students to take paid employment in addition to attending school or college (Table 21).

Table 21: Influences on students to take paid employment
(Figures indicate number of centres choosing each rating using a 5-point scale to indicate the extent to which each influence applied, where 1=not at all and 5=very much)

Influence	1	2	3	4	5
Financial requirements of preferred lifestyle	1	-	-	3	7
Financial hardship	-	3	1	1	6
Peer group pressure	-	-	5	5	1
Parental or family pressure to earn	-	2	2	4	3
Resistance to parental or family pressure to concentrate on education	4	5	2	-	-

Measures to help students balance work and studies

3.3.8 Five centres reported that they made some form of special arrangements to help students cope better with the twin pressures of study and paid employment. These included:

'There is greater discretion shown to some adult students. Some courses are timetabled only on four days per week.'
(Programme Coordinator: Research & Development, College B)

'Introduction of a 24-hour timetable this year to help students plan their time better, and a greater focus on time management when teaching study skills.'
(Student Services Manager, College C)

'Paid employment commitment is entered on student timetable so that it is acknowledged. Timetables usually have a 1-1.5 day slot when students can work.'
(Director of Student Services, College F)

'Guidance and advice via tutors.'
(Headteacher, School A)

'Vocational courses allow students to use their employment experience as evidence.'
(Senior Curriculum Manager, School E)

'Advice on time management.'
(Headteacher, School G)

3.3.9 No centre, however, reported any *special mechanisms for liaising with employers* to help limit students' hours of work to manageable levels, though the Headteacher of School B commented that in some cases contact had been made in order to register complaints.

3.3.10 Other comments recorded by centres concerning issues relating to students combining full-time education with paid employment included:

'Some programmes have had to extend the day because of rooming pressure. This may increase the conflict between employment and study.'
(Programme Coordinator: Research & Development, College B)

'There are great benefits to students from working part-time; the problem for many of them is time management.'
(Student Services Manager, College C)

'Over the last ten years more students have found that they need to work to pay for travel to college, and for text books, as well as to support their social life. There are now so few grants to help needy students.'

(Director of Student Services, College F)

'If the law was enforced pre-16, the culture would not be established that encourages students post-16 to work long hours in paid employment.'

(Deputy Head, School D)

'Too often there is a very negative view of part-time work. Why not accept it as the reality of the situation?'

(Senior Curriculum Manager, School E)

'I am suddenly seeing an enormous increase in post-18 gap year intentions. Students are saying that they need to get some money for the demands of tuition fees and maintenance costs.'

(Headteacher, School G)

4 Conclusions and implications arising from findings

Patterns of work and study

4.1 The engagement by full-time students in some form of paid employment is pervasive, with the proportion rising with age. It is commonplace amongst 14–15 year olds, and nigh on universal for those aged 16–19. Taken overall, it appears that over 60 per cent of 14–15 year-old students work at some stage during the academic year, and over 80 per cent of 16–19 year olds. A number of the remainder would combine work and study if they could. It is difficult to be precise about how this picture compares with the past, and what the trend is. Certainly, it appears that the proportion combining learning and earning has risen over time, and is higher than in the early 1980s. Furthermore, all recent surveys of young people reveal higher proportions doing so than are stated in official employment statistics.

4.2 For many young people, the job or jobs that are taken alongside study involve a significant time commitment. Almost two-thirds of those aged 16 and above with part-time jobs work for ten hours or more per week during term time, a third for 15 hours or more. Even among 14–15 year olds, almost a fifth of those with part-time jobs exceed 10 hours. There is little evidence that more than a small minority work during normal school or college hours. However, in many other cases the time available outside school or college for undertaking homework or coursework, or engaging in private study, is significantly restricted by the demands of employment.

4.3 The extent of engagement in employment, and the range of hours worked, appears to extend across students from a wide range of backgrounds. Neither varies significantly according to socio-economic grouping, or the type of catchment areas in which schools and colleges are situated. Female students appear more likely to mix work and study than males, but there is no significant gender difference in the number of hours worked. White students of British origin tend to mix work and study to a greater than average extent but, as with gender, there are no obvious ethnic differences in the numbers of hours then worked. The relatively small numbers of respondents to our survey from some ethnic groups makes it difficult to be certain that more distinctions might not exist in practice. Within our sample we had a disproportionately large number of Bangladeshi students, who were engaged in paid employment to a below average extent. However, it is possible that this pattern of lower relative take up of paid employment masks significant numbers who spend unpaid time in economic activity within family businesses.

4.4 Differences in the pattern of paid employment do exist according to the type of institution attended. Within the relevant age-bands, college students are significantly more likely than those who attend school both to take part-time jobs, and to work for long hours in them when they do so. The same applies to students studying towards vocational qualifications, compared with those taking the academic route. At this stage we cannot be precise as to the extent that these differences are explained by one or more of the following factors:

- schools may make more effort than colleges to dissuade students from engaging in long hours of part-time work, and/or be more successful in such efforts
- college timetables provide greater opportunities to work without missing classes
- the college environment, where many mature students are present, may encourage 16–19-year-old students to regard themselves as fully independent adults to a greater extent than occurs in school sixth forms
- students who choose vocational rather than academic courses may tend to be more highly motivated towards work.

Certainly, though, the research shows no evidence so far that colleges are less aware than schools about the impact of excessive hours of part-time work.

Attitudes and impact

4.5 Overwhelmingly, the motivation for students to mix work and study is to earn money. In the large majority of cases this appears to be to maintain a preferred lifestyle, rather than as a result of financial hardship. True, sizable minorities of students spend a high proportion of their earnings on expenses related to school or college attendance, and on basic living costs (especially at age 16 and above). However, the absence of differences in the take-up and hours of part-time work according to socio-economic factors, as noted in 4.3 above, suggests that deprivation is not a major factor.

4.6 On balance, most young people view the combination of paid employment and full-time education positively, irrespective of the number of hours they work. It provides them with a degree of financial independence from their parents, generally increasing as they get older. It also offers a valued introduction to the routines of working life, and confidence-building experience in dealing with a range of people and procedures. While tiredness and stress are commonplace, the demands of jobs seem to cause very few actually to miss classes as a result. Except in a small minority of cases, part-time work also appears to be an insignificant factor in causing drop-out.

4.7 Larger numbers of young people (especially at 16 and above) perceive work as having some adverse impact on their academic performance, and on their home and social life. Nonetheless, the majority believe that they are able to cope with both, and that it is quite reasonable to expect them to do so. The change in patterns of work during holidays suggests that most young people make genuine efforts to manage their time to accommodate both job and study.

4.8 Teachers and institutional managers generally share the view of their students that engagement in paid employment is, in principle, beneficial in offering a valuable preparation for adult life. However, there is also a widespread opinion that many, if not most, students work for longer hours than is good for them, and that as a consequence they tend to under-achieve and to miss out on extra-curricular activities. The evidence we have found generally supports these concerns. While engagement in work for a limited number of hours each week (up to around 10) does not appear to be strongly linked with lower achievement, and in some instances appears to enhance academic commitment and performance, beyond this level there is a strong negative correlation between hours worked and examination grades. There is also a strong link between the number of hours worked and the extent to which students report difficulties in managing work and study and concerns that they are under-performing academically. Though most students believe they can 'hack it', in general those working the longer hours have rather less confidence in their ability to do so.

4.9 Despite the general benefits that most students feel they gain from working, outlined in 4.6 above, few see any real gains in terms of a better understanding or enhancement in the relevance of their learning at school or college. Neither do most see the part-time work they are undertaking as providing much in the way of specific vocational skills relevant to a given career. No doubt these views reflect the nature of the employment in which the majority are engaged. Outside the less formal arrangements involved in jobs such as paper rounds or babysitting, most students are employed in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs in the service sector. Very few receive any training at work beyond basic instruction in the jobs being undertaken. It is noteworthy, however, that the minority of students who feel strongly that their jobs assist understanding of the relevance of their learning is much more likely to feel that part-time work has a positive impact on academic performance.

4.10 FEDA's pilot survey did not directly involve employers, and it is therefore difficult to be specific about the extent to which the requirements of the workplace are affecting students to an extent that could be claimed as unfair, unethical or illegal. Within our sample, almost all 18–19 year olds are being paid above the legal minimum hourly rates, and almost half of the 14–15 year olds are receiving more than £3.00 per hour. There are some claims that on occasion younger students are employed when older employees leave, in order to reduce wage bills, but it is not possible to say how widespread this practice is. Almost half of the students with jobs appear to be under at least occasional pressure from their employers to work for longer hours than they would prefer. In a minority of cases such pressure seems to be excessive, though we have no evidence that it is the policy of companies to exert such pressure, rather than the practice of managers and supervisors at local level. We also note with concern that in the UK it is quite legal for 14–15 year olds, who are below the minimum school leaving age, to be employed for numbers of hours per week well above the levels that have been shown to be correlated with poorer academic performance.

Implications for policy makers and institutional managements

4.11 The findings of this research strongly suggest, therefore, that while some mix of part-time work and full-time education is desirable for most young people, reductions in the average numbers of hours worked would be beneficial. This goal is likely to be difficult to achieve by Government intervention alone, in the form of legislation or regulatory mechanisms. Legal restrictions on the total numbers of hours for which 14–15 year olds can be employed would, for instance, probably be sidetracked by some young people taking more than one job. Neither does the absence of financial hardship as a major determinant in the pattern of part-time employment mean that working hours would reduce elastically in response to the payment of modest levels of student grant. As we note, well over a third of students we surveyed indicate that they will continue to work the same hours even if they were given a grant of £40 per week, and only just over one in ten will give up work altogether. Moreover, students do not appear to be swayed by judgemental advice about their lifestyles from teachers or other adults.

4.12 We therefore recommend that serious consideration is given to a combination of strategies designed to assist those young people working excessive hours voluntarily to reduce their commitment to part-time work, backed by some tightening of legislation and codes of practice, as follows:

a) Strict enforcement of the existing law regarding employment below the age of 14
b) A review of relevant legislation in respect of the employment of 14–15 year-olds in excess of ten hours per week during term time
c) The development and launch of a code of practice governing the employment of students aged 16–20 in full-time education, jointly backed by government, employers organisations and trade unions. Such a code could include recommended maximum weekly term time hours, which might be made lower during examination revision times. Employers could then be asked to sign up to the code, and to display it in workplaces
d) The widespread publication of the statistical evidence that, above limited levels, increasing hours of part-time work are strongly linked to under-achievement in examinations
e) The adoption of strategies by schools and colleges actively to support and accommodate manageable hours of part-time work by students. These could include appropriate adjustment of timetables and scheduling of coursework, and greater efforts to link the curriculum with part-time work experience
f) The introduction of a number of pilot schemes in different areas of the country to investigate the impact on part-time working hours in practice, at various levels of grant paid directly to students.

Taken together, we believe that these steps could create a culture where students are prevented from adopting adverse balances of work and study pre-16, and therefore are more likely to avoid them post-16. They could also help students, parents and employers to be more aware of the good sense of limiting the number of hours worked. In this way, there could be more chance that students themselves will choose to restrict the extent of part-time employment, and that they will have more effective support in resisting local workplace pressures to backslide. The benefits of combining work and study could then be realised, and the risk of any adverse effects reduced.

4.13 More research is now needed involving young people, schools, colleges and employers in order to test the relative effectiveness of some of the approaches outlined above. This will form the agenda for the next stage of the project.

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Appendices

LEARNING AND EARNING

FEDA Further Education Development Agency

We invite you to take part in a survey into the extent to which young people like yourself are managing to combine full-time education with paid employment. The results will be used to help make it less difficult both to work and to study. So it's important that we get your views.

Your answers will be treated confidentially. We will not release any information you supply in a form that could identify you personally to your school or college, or to anyone else.

Please complete the questionnaire which follows, answering the questions using a **black pen** to mark the appropriate boxes like this ☑, or by writing in the spaces provided. When you have finished, seal it in the envelope provided and hand it in to your teacher for return to us. Once we have received it, we will make a donation on your behalf to the **Save the Children Fund.**

Thank you for your help in this important survey.

Q1a) Do you currently do any paid work in addition to your studies at school or college?

- ☐ Yes *(Please go to Q2a)*
- ☐ No *(Please answer Q1b and Q1c)*

Q1b) Why aren't you doing any paid work at present?

(Mark more than one box, if applicable)

- ☐ Can't find a suitable job
- ☐ In between jobs
- ☐ Don't need the money
- ☐ Work would interfere with studies too much
- ☐ Work would interfere with social life too much
- ☐ Parent(s) don't want me to
- ☐ Other*(please also give details below)*

Q1c) Have you done any paid work during the past year?

- ☐ Yes ***(Now go to Q8)***
- ☐ No ***(Now go to Q8)***

Q2a) What does/do your job(s) involve?

(Mark as many boxes as applicable)

- ☐ Operating till/check-out
- ☐ Making stock checks
- ☐ Stacking shelves/collecting trolleys
- ☐ Dealing with customers
- ☐ Waiting/serving drinks
- ☐ Delivering papers
- ☐ Cooking/preparing food
- ☐ Working with computers/IT
- ☐ Cleaning
- ☐ Hairdressing/beauty therapy
- ☐ Maintenance and repair work
- ☐ Office duties
- ☐ Childcare/babysitting
- ☐ Reception duties
- ☐ Animal care
- ☐ Supervising other staff
- ☐ Labouring/manual work
- ☐ Other*(please also give details below)*

Q2b) Where do you work?
(Mark more than one box, if applicable)

- ☐ Supermarket
- ☐ Department store
- ☐ Shop
- ☐ Fast food takeaway
- ☐ Cafe or restaurant
- ☐ Pub or bar
- ☐ Newsagent
- ☐ Building site
- ☐ Health centre/doctor's/dentist's surgery
- ☐ Garage
- ☐ Hairdresser or beauty salon
- ☐ Workshop
- ☐ Garden centre
- ☐ DIY centre
- ☐ Nursery/nursing home
- ☐ Warehouse/storage depot
- ☐ Private home(s)
- ☐ Farm
- ☐ Office
- ☐ Other *(please also give details below)*

Q2c) Other than basic instruction on how to do the job, have you received any training from your employer(s)?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes *(please also give details below)*

Q3a) When do you do this/these job(s)
(Mark as many boxes as applicable)

	During school/college term-time	During school/college holidays
Weekday morning(s)	☐	☐
Weekday afternoon(s)	☐	☐
Weekday evening(s)	☐	☐
Saturday	☐	☐
Sundays	☐	☐
Timing varies *(please give details)*	☐	☐

Q3b) How many hours per week are normally involved?
(Mark as many boxes as applicable)

	During school/college term-time	During school/college holidays
Less than 5	☐	☐
5 - 9	☐	☐
10 - 14	☐	☐
15 - 19	☐	☐
20 or over	☐	☐

Q3c) Do you ever feel pressurised by your employer(s) to work additional hours against your will?

Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐

Q3d) How many hours per week would you work if you were given a grant of £40 per week?

☐ None
☐ Same as present
☐ Up to 5 hours less
☐ 5 - 10 hours less
☐ More than 10 hours less

Q4a) What is your rate of pay?

(If you have more than one job, please mark the box which applies to the one that takes up most time)

☐ Under £2.30 per hour
☐ £2.30 - £2.50 per hour
☐ £2.51 - £2.75 per hour
☐ £2.76 - £3.00 per hour
☐ £3.01 - £3.50 per hour
☐ £3.51 - £4.00 per hour
☐ Over £4.00 per hour

Q4b) Where does the money you earn go?

(Please mark boxes as applicable against each of the possible areas of expenditure listed below using the 5-point scale, where 1 = nothing spent and 5 = a great deal spent)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Schools/college expenses (including costs of travel to and from place of study, books & equipment, etc.)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Basic living costs (including contribution to home; basic foodstuffs, toiletries, clothing, etc.)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Socialising and "luxuries"(including drinks, cigarettes, cinema, clubs, hobbies/interests, fashion clothing, etc.)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Savings for major purchases (including for a holiday, to buy a bike/car, etc.)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other*(please also give details below)*

Q5a) There are many reasons why you might have decided to take paid employment while also attending school or college. From the list below, please indicate the extent to which each applies to you.

(Please mark boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gain useful experience
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Find out what work is like
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Try out specific career
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Build up track record to help get better jobs in future
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Earn money
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Help out family or friends
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Meet people/make new friends
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gain independence
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Contribute to society
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Parents want/need me to work
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other reason(*please also give details below)*

Q5b) Paid employment could have a number of effects on you. From the list below, please indicate the extent to which each applies to you.
(please mark boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gaining useful experience/skills
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gaining self-confidence
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Better understanding of relevance of what you learn at school
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Helpful preparation for adult life
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Arriving late at school/college
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Missing classes
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Difficulty finding time to complete homework/coursework
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Doing less well in school/college assessments/examinations
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Doing better in schools/college assessments/examinations
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Interference with social life
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Interference with commitments at home
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Tiredness
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Stress
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Exposure to racial, sexual or other harassment
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other*(please also give details below)*

Q5c) Does your work help you with your studies in any way?

☐ No *(please go to Q5d)*
☐ To some extent *(please specify below which subjects and how)*
☐ Yes *(please specify below which subjects and how)*

Q5d) Do you think that your work will help you in your future career?

☐ No *(please go to Q6)*
☐ To some extent *(please specify below which type of career and how)*
☐ Yes *(please specify below which type of career and how)*

Q6 Listed below are a number of statements concerning work and study. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each.

(Please mark boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I prefer my job(s) to school/college
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I enjoy both attending school/college and my job(s)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I find it difficult to manage both school/college work and my job(s)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I would prefer not to work as well as study, but I need the spending money
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I would prefer not to work as well as study, but I need to contribute to my home
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I would prefer not to work as well as study, but my parents want me to
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	I would prefer not to attend school/college, but I need to get qualified
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	On balance, young people benefit from having a job as well as studying
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Working now will help me to get a good job in the future
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Having a job makes it less likely that I will achieve good grades at school/college
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My school/college should try to make it easier for me to combine work and study
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	My employer(s) should try to make it easier for me to combine work and study

Q7 Please write below any further comments you would like to make about combining school/college studies with paid employment.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Q8 Are you

☐ Female ☐ Male

Q9 How old are you?

14	15	16	17	18	19	20 or older
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q10 How would you describe your ethnic background?

Asian

- ☐ of Indian origin
- ☐ of Pakistani origin
- ☐ of Bangladeshi origin
- ☐ of East African origin
- ☐ of Chinese origin
- ☐ of other Asian origin

Black

- ☐ of Caribbean origin
- ☐ of African origin
- ☐ of other Black origin

White

- ☐ of British origin
- ☐ of Irish origin
- ☐ of other European origin

☐ Another ethnic group

Q11 What is the occupation of the main income earner in your family?
(Please give as full details as possible)

Q12 What main qualification(s) are you studying towards at school/college?

- ☐ GCSEs
- ☐ GCE A/AS levels
- ☐ Foundation GNVQ
- ☐ Intermediate GNVQ
- ☐ Advanced GNVQ
- ☐ Other*(please also give details below)*
- ☐ NVQ level 1
- ☐ NVQ level 2
- ☐ NVQ level 3
- ☐ BTEC National Certificate/Diploma
- ☐ Higher National Certificate/Diploma

You have now completed the questionnaire. Please seal it in the envelope provided and hand it into your teacher for return to:

Graham Knight,
Lead Research Officer,
FEDA, Citadel Place, Tinworth Street, London SE11 5EH.

Many thanks for helping us with this important survey, and good luck in the future.

LEARNING AND EARNING: SURVEY OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGE

FEDA Further Education Development Agency

We are undertaking a survey into the extent to which young people are managing to combine full-time education with paid employment. This research is being carried out to help determine any steps that are needed to reduce conflicts between work and study. We will therefore be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire on behalf of your school/college.

Please answer the questions using a **black pen** to mark the appropriate boxes like this ☒, or by writing in the spaces provided. Your response will be treated confidentially and will not be published in any form that could identify you or the school/college. If you have any queries concerning the information to be provided, please contact **Graham Knight** on **0171 - 840 - 5316**.

Thank you for your co-operation in this important survey.

Name of School/College:

Contact Name:

Job Title:

Contact Telephone No.:

Q1 What proportion of your students do you estimate have paid jobs in addition to their studies at school or college?

	None	A minority	A majority	All	Unable to say
Aged 14 - 15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aged 16+	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q2a) What is the extent of paid employment (measured in hours per week) that you think your students can cope with adequately in addition to their studies?

	Less than 3	3 - 8	9 - 15	16 - 21	Over 21	Unable to say
Aged 14 - 15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aged 16+	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q2b) What proportion of your students do you estimate regularly exceed that number of hours?

	None	A minority	A majority	All	Unable to say
Aged 14 - 15	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Aged 16+	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q3a) To what extent do you think students taking jobs in addition to attending full-time courses creates the following problems?

(Please mark boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Arriving late/leaving early
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Missing classes
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Missing sports and/or other out-of-class activities
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Not completing homework/coursework adequately
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Withdrawing from courses before completion
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Under-performance in assessments
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Signs of tiredness in class
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Signs of stress in class
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other *(please also give details below)*

Q3b) Does the extent of these problems differ according to:

	Yes	No
Level of qualification	☐	☐
Programme/subject area	☐	☐

If 'Yes', please give details

Q4 What benefit do you think students gain from taking paid employment in addition to attending school or college?

(Please mark boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = none and 5 = very great)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gain useful vocational experience/skills
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gain self-confidence
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Better understanding of relevance of learning
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Helpful preparation for adult life
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Learn to get on with people
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Gain independence
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Contribute to society
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Avoid criminal/anti-social activities
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other benefits *(please also give details below)*

Q5 What other things do you think influence students to take paid employment in addition to attending school or college?

(Please indicate the extent to which the following apply, by marking boxes as applicable using the 5-point scale, where 1 = not at all and 5 = very much)

1	2	3	4	5	
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Parental/family pressure to earn
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Resistance to parental/family pressure to concentrate on education
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Peer group pressure
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Financial requirements of preferred lifestyle
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Financial hardship
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Other *(please also give details below)*

Q6 Do you make any special arrangements to help students cope better with the twin pressures of study and paid employment?

☐ No
☐ Yes *(please also give details below)*

Q7 Do students explain problems with their studies by saying that they are under pressure from their employer to work for longer hours than they would prefer?

Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Never ☐

Q8 Do you have any special arrangements for liasing with employers to help limit students' hours of paid employment to manageable levels?

☐ No
☐ Yes *(please also give details below)*

Q9 Please write below any further comments you would like to make about issues relating to students combining school/college studies with paid employment.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please return it along with the student questionnaires to:

Graham Knight
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